

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 RIO DE 01080 031922Z

11

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 EPA-04 SMI-01 OFA-01 NEA-09 EB-07

CG-00 DOTE-00 (ISO) W

----- 108520

R 031443Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2358

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

UNCLAS RIO DE JANEIRO 1080

DEPT PASS EPA AND SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, PLOS, BR

SUBJ: OIL SPILL IN RIO HARBOR

REF.: (A) MILGP BRAZIL MESSAGE 311717Z MARCH 75 TO CNO;

(B) SMITHSONIAN OBSERVATORY MESSAGE 010012Z APRIL 75 TO RIO

1. MAJOR OIL SPILL IN GUANABARA BAY, RIO DE JANEIRO, OCCURRED MARCH 26 BEGINNING AT 20:45 LOCAL TIME IN INNER HARBOR JUST INSIDE RIO-NITEROI BRIDGE AT THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF THE MAIN CHANNEL. TANKER TARIK IBN ZIYAD OF 119,000 TONS DEADWEIGHT AND IRAQ OWNERSHIP AND REGISTRY GROUNDED OR STRUCK ROCK AT EDGE OF CHANNEL (COURT OF INQUIRY STILL IN PROCESS) AND SPILLED APPROXIMATELY 10,000 TONS (UNOFFICIAL ESTIMATE) OF LIGHT GRADE CRUDE OIL. LAST PORT OF CALL OF TANKER WAS SAO SEBASTIAO, NEAR SANTOS, BRAZIL. TANKER CARRYING APPROXIMATELY 104,000 TONS OF OIL AT TIME OF SPILL. THERE ARE NO ESTIMATES FOR DURATION OF LEAKAGE BUT NEWSPAPER REPORTS WOULD INDICATE IT HAD ENDED BY MORNING. MAJOR QUANTITY OF OIL REMAINED WITHIN INNER HARBOR COVERING AREAS OF WATER AND BEACHERS WHERE SOME FIRES OCCURRED. SUFFICIENT OIL EXITED THE BAY AND WAS CARRIED NEAR AND ONTO ATLANTIC BEACHES AS FAR SOUTHWEST AS LEBLON TO EXCITE AND ANGER CARIOCAS. POSSIBILITY STILL EXISTS OF FURTHER OIL ESCAPE FROM BAY. THERE ARE MANY PRELIMINARY REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE DAMAGE TO MARINE LIFE AND BIRDS INSIDE THE BAY.

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CLEANUP TECHNIQUES HAVE INCLUDED USE OF A CHEMICAL P-69 MADE

BY HEMPEL MARINE PAINTS, AS A DISPERSANT (VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS NON-DETERGENT OR BIO-DEGRADABLE DETERGENT) AND POSSIBLY ALSO PRECIPANT, BY PETROBRAS AS THEIR USUAL TECHNIQUE. IN ADDITION, ABSORBENT PAPER, VARIOUS TYPES OF STRAWS, PINE NEEDLES, AND WOOD SHAVINGS ARE BEING TRIED TO REMOVE OIL FROM THE BEACHES.

2. THERE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSIONS AMONG THE VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED - PETROBRAS, THE BRAZILIAN NAVY, THE PORT AUTHORITY, AND THE RIO DE JANEIRO STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING AGENCY (FEEMA) - ABOUT SEEKING EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. COAST GUARD ON A REIMBURSEABLE BASIS. PETROBRAS REPORTEDLY IS PURSUING CONTACTS WITH U.S. COMMERCIAL SOURCES.

3. A VERY PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE OF THE CLEANUP IS PUT AT ONE-HALF MILLION DOLLARS. THE LONGER-TERM SCIENTIFIC STUDIES OF THE EFFECTS OF THE SPILL PHYSICALLY AND ECOLOGICALLY WILL BE MADE BY THE DIVISION OF OCEANOGRAPHY OF THE NAVAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE (CDR ROBERTO FERNANDES RODRIGUES) AND BY FEEMA (DR. HAROLDO MATTOS DE LEMOS).
DEXTER

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NNN

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